

# february is black history month



T.C.'85

At McGill, as at other educational institutions, there has been a disturbing ignorance of Black achievements and contributions to history. Partially because of this, individuals within the Black community find themselves unaware of issues vital to their cultural existence. For this reason, February has been established as Black History month.

Initially inaugurated in 1926 as "Negro History Week," by historian Carter G. Woodson, the event was intended to celebrate Black history within the Black community and to legitimate its study in schools and universities.

"It is not so much a Negro History Week as it is History Week," Woodson asserted. "We should emphasize not Negro History, but the Negro in History."

Black History Month served both a symbolic and an educational function. It gave the necessary opportunity for Blacks and Whites to absorb knowledge otherwise disregarded. But it also provided a crucial forum for Blacks to reflect on their heritage and recognize their potential as a people.

Today, Black History Month performs the same role. While schools and universities have made an effort to incorporate Black studies into certain aspects of their curriculum, the situation remains less than satisfactory.

In order for advances to be made, the Black community must be able to firmly articulate its demands. This in turn requires a medium of intellectual regeneration which Black History Month provides. Such an environment will reaffirm Black pride and self-esteem and therefore enable the community to confront discrimination.

One event, or even one month of events cannot negate the violence of discrimination or negative stereotypes. But it can help Blacks recognize their self worth so as to fight prejudice and move forward.

We, of the Black Students' Network, hope that students seize this opportunity to reflect upon Black History so that February may be as enriching for them as it will be for us.

**Michele Stephenson**  
Black Students' Network

By Tony Cisse (Gambian Artist)



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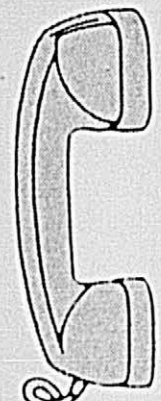
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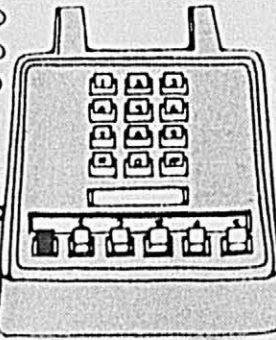
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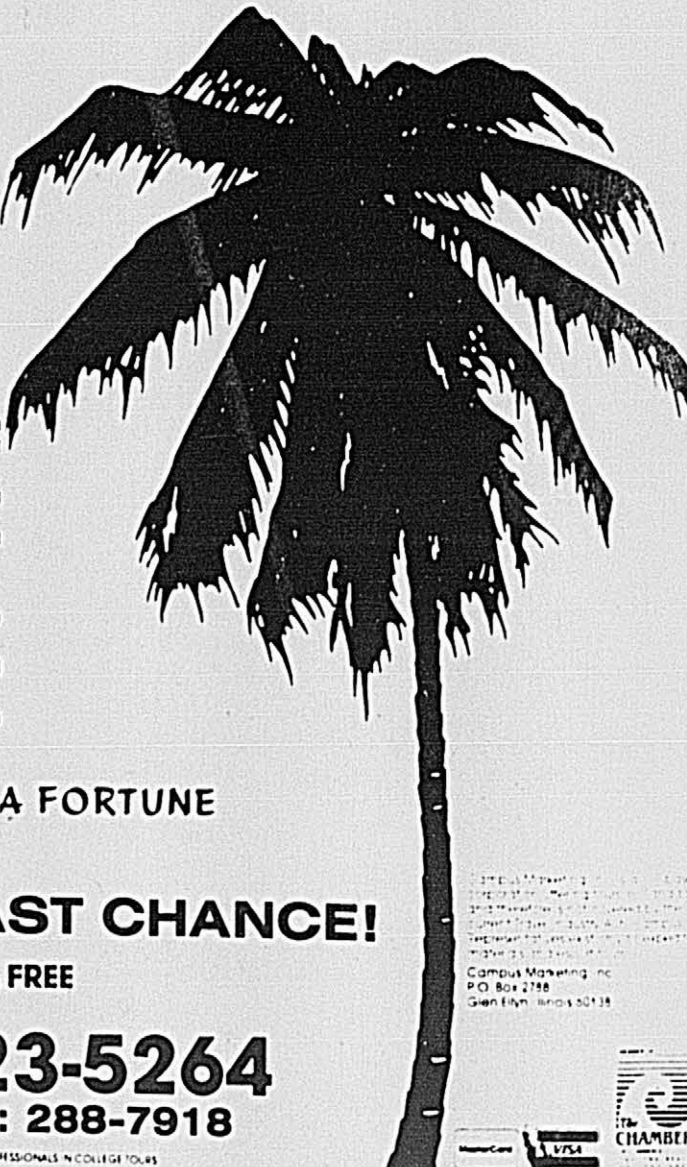
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# Where do I stand?

"We are all Black...different shades of Black." — Malcolm X

"I'm mixed...so what of it? Can I not be judged and seen simply as a human being, not pertaining to any particular racial category... just seen as a member of the Homo-Sapien species?" The clear answer to that is NO — not in the society we live in today. Humans feel the constant need to compartmentalize everything under a particular label — Black, white, asian, hispanic, native, old, young, tall, short, etc. etc. We are all put into categorized prisons from which we not only cannot escape, but from which we are also constantly judged.

But what occurs with a person who is racially and culturally 'undefinable'? In this case I refer to the person who is legitimately of mixed race and culture. This situation can cause problems for those who do not have a strong sense of who they are and where they come from. However, in my opinion a Black person of mixed background has no choice but to be Black morally, culturally, and racially. In this society there are no 'in betweens' and as mixed children we learn that quickly. Nevertheless many Blacks of mixed descent still attempt to fool themselves into thinking that they

can go on in life living 'on the fence'. Unfortunately, stark reality must some time or other be faced and their identity crisis overcome.

However, the Black person of mixed race often times faces an even harsher reality than the Black person of Black descent, for s/he must not only confront the prejudices of the white world but also the scepticism of his/her fellow Black brothers and sisters. His/her identity is forever called into question and s/he must always defend and affirm it with strong conviction and belief. Due to such experiences, many Blacks of mixed heritage often have an even stronger sense of identity simply because they must believe in themselves in order to defend their position both to the White and Black communities.

In North American society there is no room for a category of 'mixed race'. The Blacks of mixed descent who decide to label themselves as 'Universal', 'International' or perhaps 'Ethnic', may find comfort in these labels. Nevertheless such words simply reflect an escapist, idealistic attitude covering up an uncertainty of identity and cultural belonging on the part of those who hide behind these categories.

But for the Black of mixed descent, the crux of the issue lies in

the Black community's acceptance of him/her. For while the Black person of mixed heritage may affirm him/herself as being Black, this does not mean s/he will gain acceptance from the

should be used to further reinforce one's feelings about one's identity. It is important to believe in oneself no matter what stand is taken. In that way one's convictions can be strongly defended

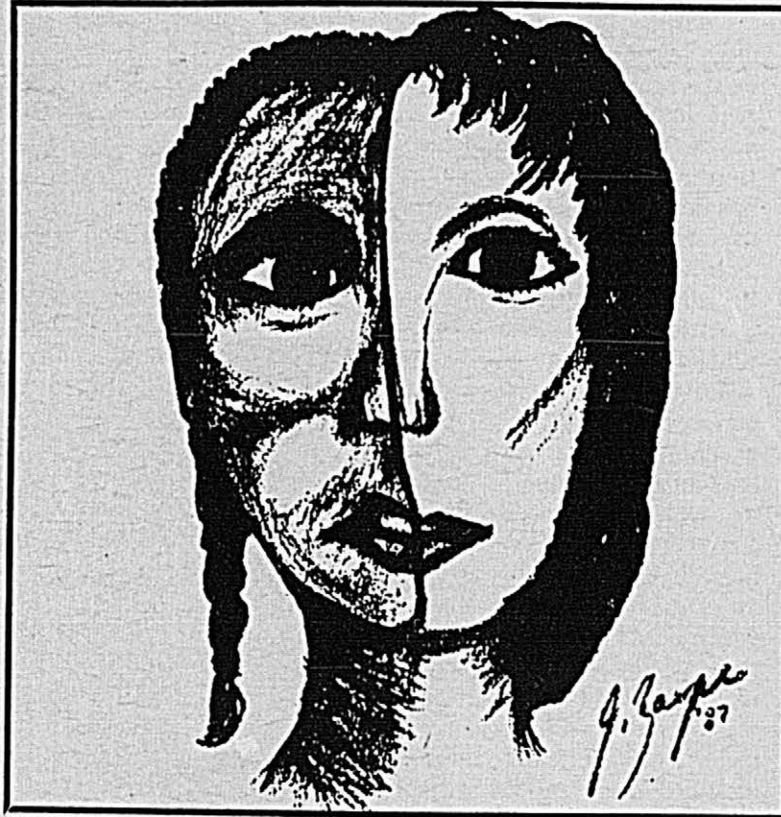
authenticity. Only the inner self can let doubt seep into the mind. This is why strong personal conviction and belief are necessary when confronting the real world, be it white or Black.

I end these thoughts with a quote from Langston Hughes who sums up my feelings in a very eloquent manner.

"Being Black in the contemporary world is not so much a matter of skin color as it is a state of mind — an attitude about the value of persons and their rights as human beings without regard to such physical accidents as color.

"To be 'Black' is to adopt a cultural response which denies and negates the traditional implications of being 'white', or 'non-white', or 'negro', as the case may be. It is an assertion that we are what we are without reference to what others may name us or name themselves."

Michèle Stephenson



## The Black church

by Gosnell L.O.R. Yorke

Afro-American scholar Dr. William E.B. Dubois (1868-1963), points out that the oldest Western institution in the Black community is not the family *per se*, but rather the Black Church.

Historically, the Black Church, more than any other institution in the Black community, has added both meaning and mystery to what it means to be Black in a society which constantly negates our existence. From its inception, the Black Church has symbolized healing and wholeness, life and liberation, and refuge and resistance.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson (1875-1950), the father and founder of Black History Month, was an ardent student of the Black Church. He published extensively on the subject, including his 1945 work, *The History of the Negro Church*.

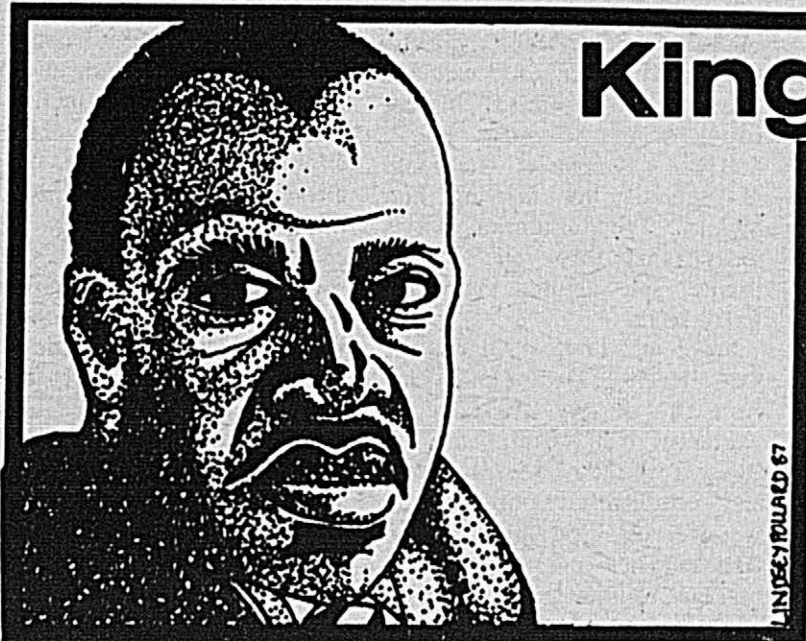
The roots of the Black Church stem from the "invisible institution" of community fostered by conditions on the sugar and cotton plantations. Unknown to the masters, slaves would steal away to worship in the bush. There, they would express their will to live — as full human beings.

Many slaves refused to accept the self-serving and distorted brand of Christianity promulgated by their masters and many of the ministers. These sought to keep the slaves subservient and 'in their places'. They insisted it was the Divine will that slaves remain as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

In the US at least, Negro spirituals were expressions of veiled protest, and an unshakable commitment to total liberation.

Gillian de Gannes

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## King remembered

A statement made on behalf of the Black Student Network at the Union United Church Service in Honour of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jan. 19, 1987.

Good afternoon. When asked to speak to you this afternoon, I was given the following heading: "The Significance of Martin Luther King to the post-secondary student". At first this may seem like a trick question on a surprise exam presented by some well-meaning teacher — the topic did appear puzzling to me at first glance, and I was not quite sure of the answer. While the civil rights movement was in the great scheme of things just a couple of years ago, for those of us now embarking on post-secondary careers, it is a lifetime ago. Our images of Martin Luther King are all reaped from the media — Black and white photos on the television screen or on a magazine page. For many of us, the man, his philosophy and his

legacy are elusive phenomena, whose significance to us we often find difficult to articulate.

This may be due to a lack of Black History in Canadian schools at both the secondary and post-secondary levels — so we have never had to fear such a question on a surprise exam. But more than that, the meaning of Martin Luther King is all around us and does not need a history class to be revealed but only a pointed question such as this, so that one may be forced to retrieve it from the depths of consciousness to remind oneself of who and why we are.

There are those of us who remember the man but not his ideas. We remember him once a day each year and perhaps celebrate that we have a hero we can call our own. But why he is a hero often evades us and thus the point of celebration is lost.

For it is his philosophy, and the legacy of his courage to carry out

that philosophy, which holds the most significance, especially to those of us now in our 20s. We are the ones reaping the benefits of his struggles and of his sacrifices. But too often we take this for granted, not appreciating our entrance into university as a hard-won right but instead using these advantages to personal ends. We are the 'me' generation whose goals are individualistic and not aspirations for the joint advancement of our community. We are ready to answer to the demands of the market economy — get a good job, have lots of money and in the end, security. But too easily do we neglect the often unspoken demands of who and why we are.

And it is here that Martin Luther King becomes most meaningful. To those of us not willing to abuse the products of his work, to those of us who realize there is much yet to be achieved, he may serve as an example. It may not be his specific philosophies of non-violent resistance nor integration that we choose to adopt, but we may follow him as a model of the courage, faith and sacrifice that the struggle exacts. His was the courage to dream, as his resonant voice reminds us in his all-too-famous speech 'I Have a Dream', and his was the faith in that dream, faith in one's self and in one's community that dreams can be made true. But his was also the acknowledgement that dreams cost — that for change to come about sacrifices must be made.

For we of the 80s, sacrifice may mean forsaking the false security

of our society. It may be as simple as forsaking the dreams of the head, to follow the dreams of the heart. But it is not that we will be without purpose — for we must have the faith in our community that our sacrifices will not be in vain. That each inch gained will be used to the best of its advantage.

For this is what we owe Martin Luther King — when we honour him today and on similar days in similar years, we owe him the confirmation that his struggle has not been in vain. That we acknowledge and appreciate his efforts and moreover that we intend to add to his achievements. For we are now the bearers of his dreams, or more pointedly, we are now the dreamers.

To the post-secondary generation of the 80s, Martin Luther King is most remembered for who and why we are today. He earned us access to the most basic of human rights. He gave us importance in ourselves, and he left us a legacy of courage and strength. When we honour him today, we should celebrate not only the hero, the man and his philosophy, but also celebrate the potential heroes within us all — that we may borrow from his legacy the strength to carry on the struggle. For all is not well in the 80s — we have come a long way since the 60s. Or have we? And so I leave with you another trick question, the answer to which lies within us all.



# Roots of Rasta

by Janice Dayle

**T**he Rastafarian religion started in Jamaica in the late twenties and early thirties. It is difficult to describe how this religion began without taking account of Jamaica's history as well as the condition of the island's society in that era.

Many of the inhabitants of Jamaica, prior to and after their liberation from slavery, found refuge from their oppressive condition in the strong religiosity expressed in Christian orthodoxy and in the immense number of blended heresies. The African descendants tried to hold on to their shattered culture and although many were greatly influenced by the European religious concepts, many managed to conserve their own.

The Maroons are an example of this. They were released by the Spanish in 1655, after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. They settled in the inner mountainous regions of Jamaica. These Maroons remained free during the next decades of slave trading by the British. This group of Africans (mainly of Ashanti origin), retained strong elements of their African religion, ritual beliefs and practices.

Before the end of slavery, the slaves, who had all been greatly tormented, had been encouraged to be passive. White religious leaders used the laws of 'God' to squash rebellious tendencies. However, with the Christian faith came the bible, and its teachings were probably the only accessible types of education for the slaves. Hence biblical writings were acknowledged and studied intensely.

The complicated and immense problems which arise in any colonized country were also present in Jamaica. An unjust social system, coupled with the established Christian religion

which in a sense served that system, frustrated the African population.

I wish at this point to make a clear distinction between those ex-slaves who held onto their African roots in every sense, never underestimating their worth, and those who would do practically anything to disregard their heritage and change all but their skin colour to please the British. The former I will refer to as African and the latter Negroes.

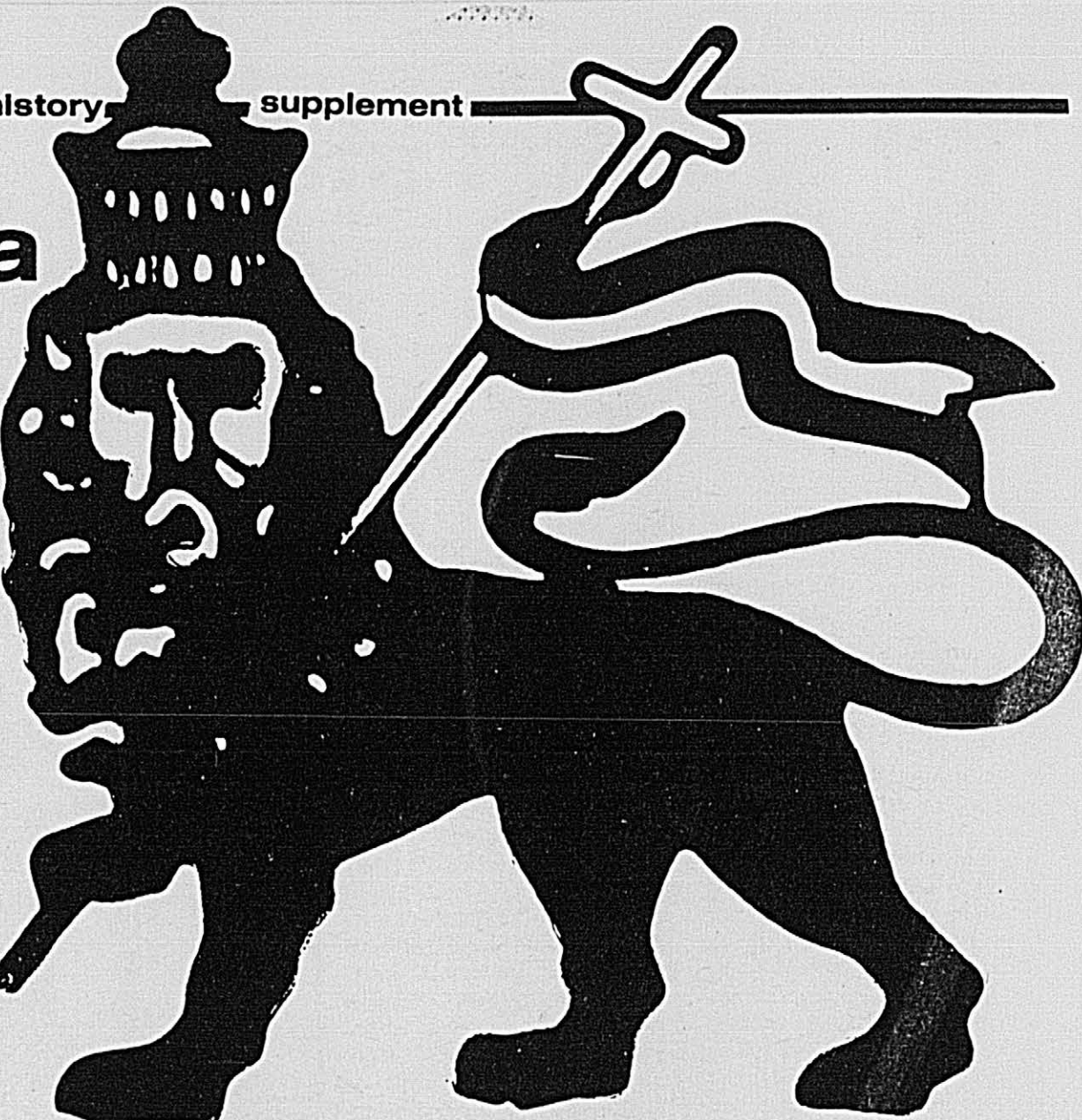
Studying the bible and understanding its firm basic messages of peace, love and goodness, Africans saw great contradictions between the words and the actions of the white people. This confusion led to argument: how can a white God be perfect in view of the unjust manner in which Africans and negroes were treated? The Africans could not identify with the images in the bible as they were presented to them, since there were clear indications in the way the scripture was relayed that they were an inferior set of people. The negroes, however, adapted wholeheartedly to the European religious attitudes.

In the late twenties, a Jamaican called Marcus Garvey was recognized as a great prophet by a sect of people. His message of repatriation, through the *Back to Africa* movement, and his words of "Look to Africa where a black king shall be crowned, for the day of deliverance is near...", were ideals that set the stage for Rastafarianism.

In 1930, Ras Tafari was crowned Emperor Haile Selassie I in Ethiopia, and took the titles 'King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah'. Very soon after this many preachers began to preach that the Ethiopian Emperor was the returned Messiah and cited Revelation 5:2,5 and 19:19,20 as the basis for their preaching. This was a direct expression of their disbelief in a white God. They thought that God had to be black; this is the only God with whom they wished to identify. Africans had always seen white people as the oppressor on this island.

In 1934 one of these preachers, L.P. Howell, was arrested and found guilty of sedition for preaching this doctrine and for distributing pictures of Haile Selassie, which he called passports back to Ethiopia. His arrest did not change the beliefs of the sect of Africans. In fact the people came together and called themselves Rastafarians. Their belief in Haile Selassie remained unchanged.

Italy's brutal invasion of Ethiopia, in 1936, was highly publicized across the world, and the Rastafarians (Rastas) were delighted when Haile Selassie and his 'underdeveloped' army defeated their invaders. Ethiopia was free and it remained that way, unlike any other African country,



In 1937, Haile Selassie's patronage helped found the Ethiopian World Federation in New York City. This was mainly to promote unity and solidarity of black peoples of the world. A year later this movement was established in Jamaica. In 1955, through this federation, Haile Selassie granted five hundred acres of fertile Ethiopian land for any Africans who wanted to repatriate.

Before the 1960s, the Rasta doctrines and beliefs were neither acknowledged nor appreciated by the majority of Jamaican society, both white and negro. Their first main settlement was in the rural area of St. Catherine, with many hundreds of Rastas. Police raids on their camp, 'Pinnacle', broke it up permanently in 1954, causing the Rastas to emerge from isolation and spread into the city where their numbers increased.

In 1958 Claudius Henry, a prominent Rastafarian preacher, was arrested and charged with treason because of a misunderstanding over cards he was handing out to relay Marcus Garvey's repatriation idea. Thousands thought these cards were actual boat tickets to Africa; many sold their possessions and gathered to wait in vain for the ships to arrive. Guerrilla warfare broke out soon after his arrest and led to the execution of Henry's son (who had come from New York especially to defend his father) and the Black American friends fighting with him.

Attitudes towards the Rastas improved after Jamaican independence in 1962 and a study of Rastafarianism conducted by the University of the West Indies. Emperor Haile Selassie visited in 1966 as a guest of the government and established a school in Trench Town, a Jamaican ghetto. Years later a mission of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was set up in

Kingston.

In the same year, the government began a policy of urban renewal and development of the slum areas chiefly occupied by Rastas. The movement scattered into many smaller groups throughout the city and country. Some of these developed different ideas, recognizing Haile Selassie's successful leadership in Ethiopia but denying him divinity. The Rastafarian cult is today, after fifty years of existence, split up into many different sects.

Peace and Love — One Love, One Heart — One God, One Aim, One Destiny. These are the utterances of all Rastafarians. The Rastas read their bibles in depth, and keep themselves informed on world events, especially events in Africa. They consider biblical passages to have been written by and about mainly black people. The Rastas look at the King James translation as a translation by white people of an oppressive nation. There is still a half that has never been told because the Macabee version of the bible is unavailable.

As the Rastas spread throughout Jamaica they began to influence many people, youth in particular, who were unsatisfied with the doctrines taught to them in the churches of other religions. Ninety percent of Rastas are former Christians. In recent times people from every race have become Rastafarians. A casual observer who thinks the Rastas are racist should take a closer look. Black people in the west, all the descendants of slaves, have had a common problem preserving and appreciating their identity — but the Rastas denounce the desire people sometimes have to be like others in terms of physical appearances. One cannot love God without loving oneself first, and loving all others.

Beards and locks are grown by most Rastas. The locks (long plait-like hair) are actually an African hair style. To the Rasta it symbolizes the lion's mane, a symbol of strength. Many black people today wear this hairstyle as a fashion without having any connection with the Rasta faith.

Natural living is a common philosophy for Rastas. Their dietary laws include abstention from eating pork and salt. Some are strict vegetarians.

Even though the language of the Jamaican Rasta is thoroughly Jamaican, their speech is distinguished by several interesting characteristics. In the pure Jamaican creole (derived from African languages, Spanish and English), the first person singular in all cases is expressed by the pronoun 'me'. For example — 'Me have me pen'. The plural of the first person is 'we'. For example — 'we have we pen'. On the other hand Rastas perceive this pronoun 'me' as being expressive of subservience. Consequently, the pronoun 'I' is of special importance, and is expressed in place of the servile 'me'. Singularly it is 'I', as in 'I have I pen', and in the plural form it is 'I and I', or 'I and I have I and I pen'. Many words have been changed into 'I' forms, like 'laughter' instead of daughter. Although this may seem insignificant, it is part of the creation of a new culture for some lost Africans.

Rasta is an experience; it is to me a realistic confrontation of a people with a primordial but historically denied racial selfhood. All that is contained in this religion in terms of rituals and other details would fill hundreds of pages. Hopefully, I have been able to enlighten you to the fact that there is no blind idiocy involved in the decisions of the members of this religion.





by Richard Iton

# Echoes of Motown

**M**otown music brings to mind a specific set of images in much the same way that bebop, swing, disco and punk do — Black and white dancing youths, skinny ties, turtlenecks, short hair for men and shorter skirts for women and some of the most aerodynamically fascinating hairdos for women that the modern age has ever seen. (Can you imagine Motown without VO5?)

But the music was, and is, equally an integral part of the Black cultural and political movement, and the strains within it.

The music was characterized by loud drums, tight popping bass lines and spare, dramatic arrangements. It was the Supremes, the Four Tops, the Temptations, the Vandellas, the Pips and the Jackson Five. It was Diana Ross, Marvin Gaye, Edwin Star, Stevie Wonder, Gladys Night, Smokey Robinson, and, of course, Michael Jackson.

And it was in many ways the ultimate teenage music — songs that could, in two minutes and forty-two seconds, explain to the average acne-addled American teenager why he or she was having so much trouble getting that first kiss and holding onto it. It was also the sound of perfect and perpetual innocence in the face of a cynical, debased reality.

Today, a Motown re-make is a pretty safe bet for the top 40 — Phil Collins, David Bowie and Mick Jagger, Linda Ronstadt, Rod Stewart and others have successfully applied this formula — which is to say that the stuff still sounds good.

Motown was more than great music. It also represented a major development in the 'crossover' phenomenon — the process by which non-White, non-mainstream peoples sell their product to middle America. Motown convinced White America that with the proper packaging and in the proper dosage, Afro-American culture was an acceptable commodity for exchange, consumption and profit-making. On the part of Berry Gordy Jr., Motown's head guru and owner, this was not a mere coincidence.

**T**he Motown sound and image were carefully tailored and designed so as to most effectively (ie. profitably) infiltrate the American pop industry. Artists were dressed in ties and jackets, their hair either greased into submission or processed high up into radar-detectable bouffants. Talented youths off the motorcity streets were sent to charm school and taught how to smile and bow and curtsy and say thank-you — especially how to smile. Motown was the shining, smiling face of Black American youth, eons away from the brooding images of the bebop, blues and early rock 'n roll eras. These were Black youths that you could trust to wash your car.

For a period, "the sound of young America" was just

that — Motown ruled supreme. But the sound and sensation, the almost total domination of the mid-'60s pop charts that Motown represented, ironically ended with the arrival of Motown's greatest promotional success, the Jackson Five, in the early '70s. The "shining, smiling" face was out of sync with the reality of the American youth experience.

Musically, the Stax and Atlantic labels were producing the much grittier soul of Otis Redding, Solomon Burke, Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett and Sam and Dave. Sly and the Family Stone were proclaiming that 'everybody was a star' as they challenged Motown's conservative image. With Jimi Hendrix, they created a disturbing mayhem on Motown's carefully constructed dancefloor.

Politically and culturally, there was Black nationalism in the form of Malcolm X, the Panthers and Stokely Carmichael. There was Vietnam, three summers of riots and an increasingly influential drug culture. All of these factors shook Motown's ability to shape the face that young Black America chose to show to the world, and more importantly, to itself.

**B**y the early '70s, the artists were becoming more important than the company. Stevie Wonder emerged as an independent musical genius. Marvin Gaye released "What's Going On" (recently voted Best of All Time by England's New Musical Express). The album overturned all of the traditional Motown conventions of short songs, safe lyrics, smiling

cover shots. By this point, synchronised dance routines, hair straightening, bouffants and tightly-structured two-and-a-half minute pop songs were anachronisms, ready to be repackaged as a three-record-set 'blast from the past' on late night TV.

The passing of the Motown era was both a part and a reflection of another larger phenomenon. At the same time that Berry Gordy Jr. was trying to penetrate American radio, Martin Luther King Jr. was trying to penetrate mainstream American consciousness. Both efforts were attempts to integrate Black America, in image or in reality, into the larger American nation.

From the Brown desegregation decision in 1954, the civil rights movement spearheaded by the young Dr. King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference proceeded to undertake a revolution in the socio-political status of Blacks within the American nation. The march on Washington, the '64 Civil Rights Act, the '65 Voting Rights Act and the '68 Civil Rights Act and a slew of smaller yet equally significant victories, are all part of the King legacy.

But the King era ended much in the same way that the Motown era ended. By the mid-60s, as the civil rights movement headed further northwards, Dr. King found himself increasingly unable to channel the energies and emotions of Black America into his integrationist, non-violent strategies and programs. Northern Blacks, tired

of the standard integrationist platitudes, and unexcited by the prospect of sharing lunch counters with Whites, were becoming increasingly nationalistic in their attitudes and allegiances.

**K**ing's efforts in the North were way-laid by the same forces that spelled the end of the Motown era — the Black Power movement, Malcolm and the Muslims, and the general unwillingness of northern Blacks to kneel and pray in the face of violence, to smile for the camera and to turn the other cheek.

Naturally, King's murder in 1968 was a major turning point in the fortunes of the civil rights movement. The latter half of the decade saw Black America moving from integrationism towards a more nationalistic orientation.

Indeed, there have been two primary drives in the unfolding of Black American political and cultural history. The first was a desire by Black America and Black Americans to be understood and accepted by the rest of the nation. The second was Black America's need to better understand itself — the drive to develop a Black American consciousness.

These two drives, the integrationist and the nationalist, have defined the struggles and aspirations of the Black American community. There have been attempts to dissolve Black America into the mainstream of American life. But there is also the desire to examine and develop the essence of what being a Black American is, regardless of the attitudes of middle America.

For King and Gordy, the emphasis was on finding a way to gain white America's acceptance, confidence, and ultimately, its business. For Malcolm X, Amiri Baraka, and Marcus Garvey, the priority was to push Black America into confronting itself, and once having developed some sense of consciousness, to deal with the myriad problems Blacks face as individuals and as a group.

**O**ften, these two drives have competed for attention. Occasionally, one has been pursued to the exclusion of the other. Currently, Black American culture, in the widest sense, is once again very much oriented towards integration, towards gaining White America's acceptance.

'Crossing over' has become the main objective, whether it is the Black middle class' desperate and soulless drive into American materialism, Whoopi Goldberg's blue contact lenses, Lionel Richie's ever-increasingly lame music or Michael Jackson's mystifying (and ultimately grotesque), drive to physically transform himself.

It is this orientation that accounts for the continuing inability of Black American artists to accurately portray Black American reality. In this environment the Cosby Show has managed to enthrall so many, even though its portrayal of Black family life — or any family life — is completely unrealistic.

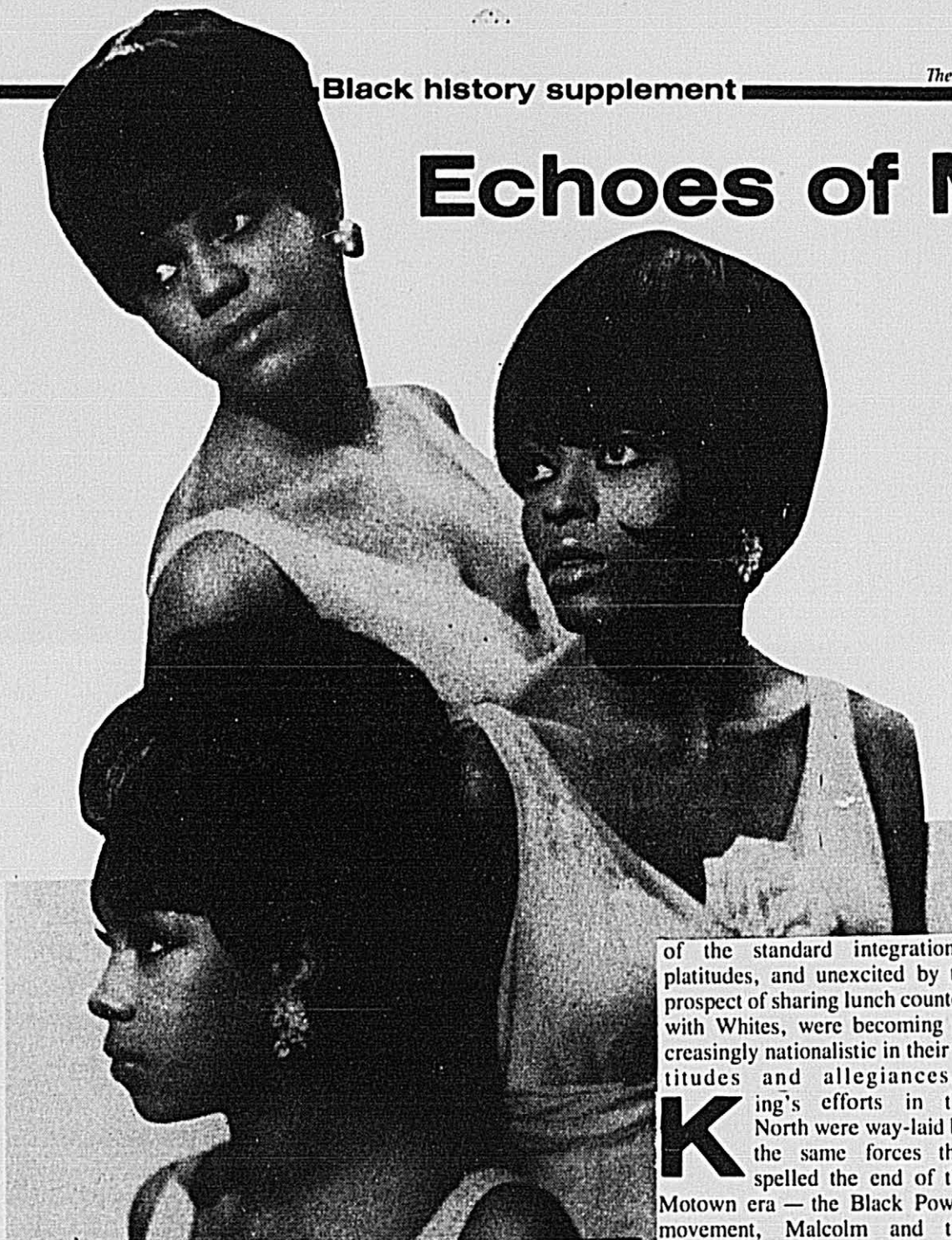
White America is pleased to see a Black family that 'acts white', and Black America is pleased to see a family that has 'made it' but still listens to jazz.

**D**espite these proclivities, there are still artists willing to examine and develop Black culture on its own terms and for its own sake. Wynton Marsalis' dedication to jazz tradition has to be admired. The singing of Anita Baker, rooted in classical Black pop tradition, has managed to attract mainstream attention without compromising her artistic integrity. Much the same can be said for Shelton 'Spike' Lee and his films *Joe's Bed-Sky Barbershop: We Cut Heads* and *She's Gotta Have It*. Despite the pressures to do otherwise, he has managed to make films about Black America for a Black American audience.

As a group, Blacks have to choose whether it is more important to be understood or to understand themselves. Is an independent, self-sustaining Black American culture a viable or even desirable alternative? And how does one balance the triumphs of King and the pleasures of Motown with the image of Michael Jackson, or the knowledge that many of our youth have become alienated from any positive sense of themselves as Blacks?

In remembering Motown, one should respect the significance of both the musical and the political legacies. For the first time, Black and White youth were listening to much of the same music and sharing the same melodic fantasies, although from different sides of the railroad tracks.

But Motown also represents the system by which Black culture is remodelled, remade and watered down, to suit the dictates of the American mainstream.





# Reggae

## Jah beat comin' up

by Janice Dayle

Reggae had its initial flare in the 70s throughout North America. Its greatest audience streamed in to rock to such groups as Bob Marley and the Wailers, Burning Spear, Gregory Isaacs and Black Uhuru. As this roots music gained enough recognition to grant it entry into the prestigious American Grammy Awards, the market for reggae as well as its audiences declined. Producers are unable to attract big enough crowds to fill relatively small venues. But still, music goes on.

Players of this roots, African-flavoured music are appreciated for their presentation of a unique spiritual force, but they have to contend with the demands and prejudices of the international commercial scene. In this worldwide arena, or 'rat race' as Bob Marley called it, the 'reggae riff' catapults to the top sooner when presented by British 'pearly' groups and Blondie. What is happening is possibly a public reaction to false impressions created by those 'fun seekers' who view the Rasta-Reggae-Jamaican based cultural music as being drug or criminal related.

Overcoming these false impressions is a mammoth task. They could be effectively countered if the crowds who initially wailed up a storm upon hearing the Wailers would faithfully practice some 'overstanding' (understanding) and give some support. Is it the messages of "Got to have Kaya now..." that had a magnetic power and hold on listeners? Are the sounds of Toronto-based Lillian Allen who screams "...and I fight back" or Leroy

Sibbles, who predicts that we will "weep and mourn" if things in time don't change, dreaded so much that people have withdrawn from enjoying and supporting reggae? Well, 'hear me now', the audience is the main factor to be considered in the continual development of reggae music.

In Montreal various bands have been struggling to give this city, and eventually the world, good original sounds. Their intention lies not only in projecting their "message to the world" as Jah Children states, but also in generating the public's interest once more. Club owners have complained in the past about some local artists' lackadaisical attitude towards performing. Greater opportunities for artistic expression, coupled with forthright critiques on individual attitudes, could solve these problems. However, music is also a business, and sometimes the sole source of income for local musicians. If it does not prove even slightly lucrative, then — "...a hungry man is an angry man."

1986 went out with a reggae 'bang bang', and now, just four weeks into 1987, I see a 'boom-she-boom' a-coming.

Kali and Dub Inc. opened the 1987 Montreal reggae scene at the Café Campus on January 11, joining Singer Judah and Jah Children Band. Kali's hot new Anzanian dub, released on cassette, contains deep-rooted social commentary that had members of the audience exclaiming "Truth, Truth and Rights!" This band will perform in Gert's Pub on January 31, and at Concordia's Loyola Campus on January 30.

Check it out.

McGill was graced last Friday by the presence of the dynamic, Ontario-based Messenjah, who alongside Jah Cutta and his Determination Band created an incredible Reggae Vibration in the Union ballroom. Both bands will be sure to rock you high again on February 14 at Concordia's Jungle Bash.

Another band, Reggae Rampage, held their debut performance at the new Roots Club on Friday January 23. Robin, the band leader, is formerly of Israel As One and New Horizon. The band will continue their rampage this coming Friday and Saturday at the same venue.

Jah Man Productions will continue to delight Montrealers this year starting with a March 7 production featuring Echo Minott and General Three, direct from Jamaica. Locals on that bill will be recording artist Spaceman and DJ Daddy Ray.

Speaking of DJs, if you just want to rock and groove with truly happy crowds, then "rope in" on February 21 at the Echo Dance Studio, and rock to the music of Social Roots and the Enforcer. Ricky (Roots), of Social Roots, has been heating up the place for the past five years with his numerous sessions. The show will feature several guest DJs.

CHOM has also slipped a reggae hour into their schedule on Monday nights at 11 pm.

Hey people, let me tell you something — reggae is not going to fade away. So just cool and love it up. ONE LOVE.

by Gillian de Gannes

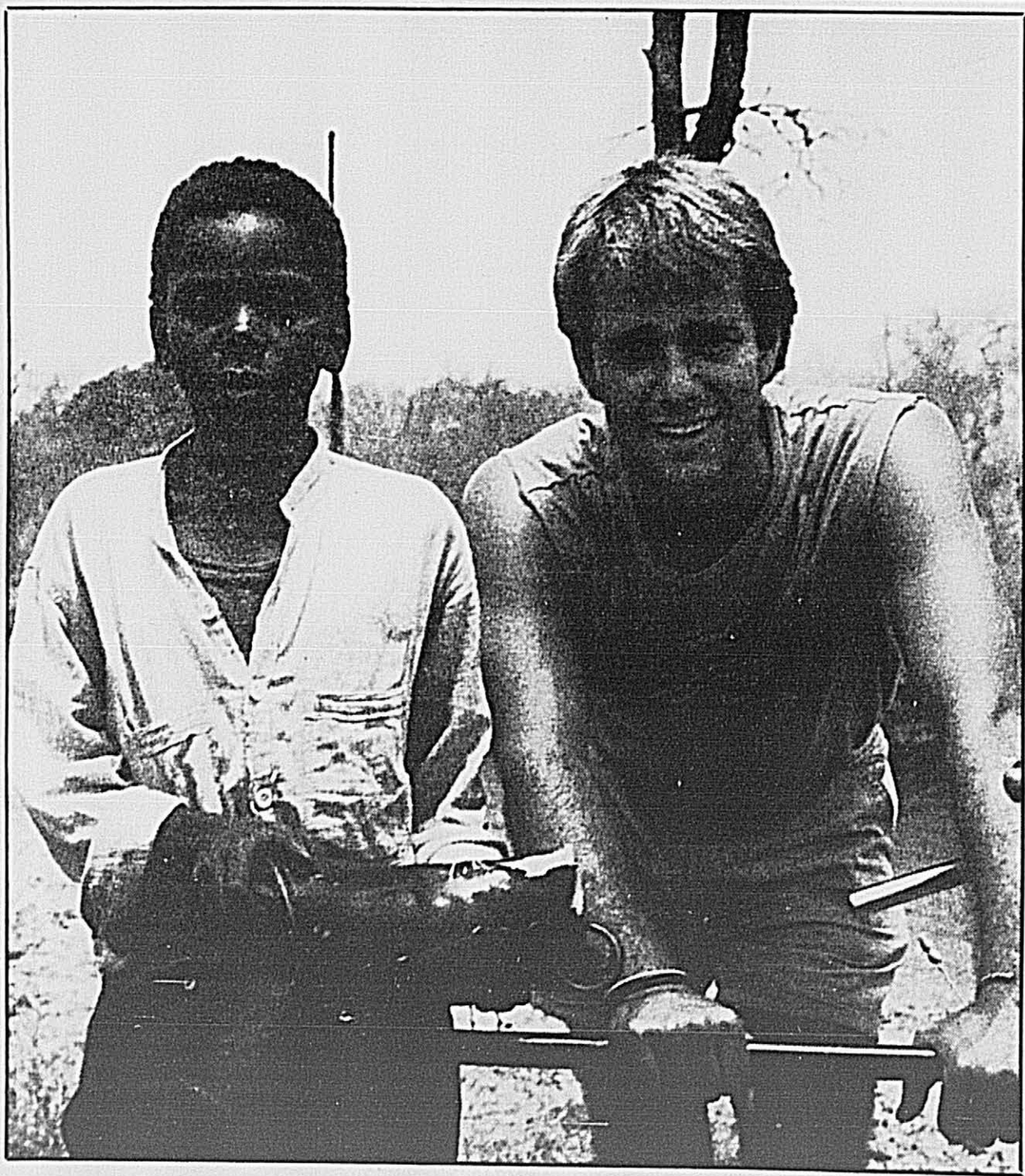
In Alice Walker's words for a woman, "coming out into the world must be doubly armed and prepared. Because for her it is simply a new world to be gained, is an old world that must be reclaimed."

This reclaiming of the old world has been the task of much of the writing by Black women in the United States. It involves breaking stereotypes of the Black woman, either 'mammy', 'sex kitten' or 'sapphire'.

Contemporary authors like Toni Morrison and Pauley Norman have sent in their novels Black women to defy such stereotypes. At the same time, however, the women characters are distinctly Black in that they are in circumstances and situations that reflect what these authors perceive as central to the Black experience in the United States.

One such concern is coming to terms with the lack of it. The authors are hastening to the top of the mountain, but in the process of doing so, they are losing their essential identity. That is not what the authors would prefer. They want to be poor, but that in aspiring to prove their living conditions to the world, they deny identification with their community or with their past.

This is seen as both an economic and cultural phenomenon; as Black women capable of procuring what was



## Mauritius: A

by Jonathon Ellison

I am in the small fishing village of Mahebourg on the island of Mauritius, approximately two thousand miles off the coast of Mozambique in Southern Africa.

Apart from the French missionary priest whom I have not seen for at least a month, I am the only white person here amongst the black Creole people and the Muslim Indians. I arrived some five weeks ago and have spent my time living with a Fisherman, his wife, an uncle and eleven children; they are all black. To date, they have only lost three infants, but show happiness that they're safe and sound in the heavens above.

The house is a very small, corrugated-tin hut. We must fetch our water, there is no toilet, and at night we are thankful for the dull light bulb that hangs from the ceiling. During meals, we share both plates and forks, and our diet consists mainly of rice, fish and local plants; when the fishing is good, vegetables are a treat. For this family, where thoughts beyond the present are rare, this is home.

I have now been assigned as babysitter for the two youngest sons, as everyone else has left for the market or the river. One is three, the other eighteen months, and I am grateful they have found a game that not only keeps them occupied, but are also right there by my side as I write in my journal. It is one of the few chances I get to be alone not only with my thoughts, but with pen and paper in hand. Already I feel

myself looking back on this time spent with these beautiful people.

I guess what amazes me most is how comfortable I have become in these surroundings. The uniqueness of true brotherhood and togetherness once experienced amongst the people of this village in Fiji, is so alive and once again that it stops me in my tracks. Never before have I been involved in such poverty and yet been offered so much. I must stay several minutes so as not to be the biggest and first serving at the table. I had to insist on sleeping on the floor for the first few nights; it was only when they stopped insisting I sleep on the foam mattresses coming from the States that I accepted myself. There are only three beds, they somehow accommodate a lot.

At first, my sleeping arrangements were a mystery. Upon zipping myself into a sleeping bag, the children completely inside, the children physically inspect this bizarre situation. Touching me from head to toe, they asked "Ou est Jon?", "Where is Jon?" in attempts to find out what my friend was doing. On many occasions I woke up with a warm wet blanket on the side of the foam, but the sleep of the black child beside me, his hand clutching my left thumb, was more than all worthwhile. I was very sad to leave, but I know my day is coming.

It strikes many of the visitors as very uncommon that I consider myself as a complete equal amongst the people here, yet I can see that they are. When I join the father with the children each morning at five, I feel myself integrated with his friends and



# body the past

the Black world she doubly there is not med. There claimed." world has e literature the United ing down woman as or 'whore'. ce Walker, Marshall pre-omen who same time, actors are are placed ons which perceive as nce in the



community, or ee Blacks aterial lad- esaking an to suggest all Blacks ing to im- hey should the com- nomic and ks become s formerly

only available to the White middle classes, they lose themselves in a White identity.

In Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, Hagar is a woman who finds herself no longer attractive to her lover. She figures it must be due to her ugliness. But the 'beauty' she measures herself against is the beauty put forth by the White media. So, she sets out to make herself beautiful by buying brand name cosmetics and beauty aids. But at the end of her shopping spree, she gets caught in a downpour, gets drenched,

goes home, collapses with a fever and dies.

Paule Marshall also addresses the lack of identity among the black upper classes in her novel, *Praisesong For The Widow*.

The widow, Avy Johnson, while on a Caribbean cruise is forced to reflect on her past lives, that which she spent in a cramped apartment in Brooklyn with her young family, and that spent in a large home in a white middle-class suburb.

In their efforts to get to the top, she

and her husband came to deny themselves the pleasures of listening to jazz music and dancing barefoot on the hardwood floor. Music and dance embody a link with a past, and the hardwood floor echoes the hardened ground on which the praisesong is later danced. The praisesong is performed by the elders on the tiny island of Carriacou in honour of a past they hardly recollect.

The dance represents the determination on the part of a people to lay claim to a heritage from which they have been severed. It also resembles a dance that was danced by the elderly people in Tatem and which Avy had witnessed during childhood visits to her aunt.

The physical and mental journey culminating in the praisesong forces Avy to retrieve her heritage and acknowledge her responsibility to the past. Marshall does not have Avy give up the wealth which she and her husband had worked so hard to achieve, but at the end of the novel Avy returns to New York with plans to turn her late aunt's home in Tatem into a summer camp for lower income kids. It is perhaps not the grandest gesture, but it is what Avy is capable of.

Integral to their efforts to retrieve the past, Black women writers often work to free Black women from their position of silence and obscurity. This involves the assertion that although Black women have borne the brunt of oppression in the United States, they have a positive and valuable history.

continued on page 10

# All God's children

past while ople.

the most is become in que feeling erness I a black d abundant ight in my een so in- yet, have t argue for o have the very meal. n the floor s only then ke one of pletely to in all, and the entire

out to the reefs. There are no more odd looks as I leave no stone unturned in my pursuit to be treated as if we all shared the same colour in our skin. The tremendous enthusiasm displayed in the black faces of those who watched me spear my first octopus, seemed to be such a step up the ladder of equality; such a natural high. I had to shout aloud to several moments, holding the dead beast high in the air, with strong hopes of being able to capture that moment forever.

The evening to follow found celebrations of the highest order in the local fishermen's bar, a tiny bamboo hut. It consisted of stools scattered about, warm Mauritian beer, and all the fishermen making endless toasts to my first octopus.

I am told we eventually made it home safely, after numerous attempts at 'Gentil-Allouette' in Creole at the top of our lungs.

For a change of pace, I one day accompanied the oldest son in his work at the Cane fields. Now in an age group common to my own, I joined dozens of young black men in the extremely difficult job of cutting sugar cane. At first, the astonishment and humour written in their faces only supported the tradition that white man did not cut cane; white man was the boss. I was about to encounter, face to face, the first form of racial discrimination here in Mauritius, yet, for the first time in my life, it was to be through the eyes of those facing the white man.

The cutting began at around five, as I assumed it about an hour's walk from our 4 am departure. In teams of six, me the seventh, we started hacking away

where the giant rows of cane met the road. The plan was to keep with your row until you eventually met up with those cutting on the other side, walking towards you. Each man was responsible for his own row and the picking up of the usable stocks of cane to be throws into your team's pile.

I had obviously fallen way behind and soon found myself the only one left in this particular part of the field. I glanced over to my team across the road, and was surprised to see them standing together in a somewhat military sort of way.

At that point, a beige Mercedes came into view, moving slowly up the road. Inside, a black driver at the wheel, a white man in the back seat. The car stopped and out jumped the boss. He was inquiring as to why work had been going so slow in the past few weeks, showing no concern for the recent heat wave that brought forty degrees celsius of pure mugginess into the fields each morning before noon.

The men stood quietly talking amongst themselves, soaking in sweat, while the black foreman assured the boss that things would pick up. I made no attempt to keep myself hidden from this scene and the boss was extremely surprised to see me walk up and join my team, exhausted from the work. From the blacks, I was greeted with a jug of water and a pat on my back. Smiles were everywhere as I started to joke about the easiness of the job. From the white, there was no smile, and no pat on my back. Rather, the expression of disbelief that I would lower myself to that level. After all, he must of thought, 'you are white!'

The day has now arrived when I must leave my adopted family. They are sad, and worried as my next stop is South Africa. I pay for all their bus fares to and from the airport as we cram ourselves into the already-full local bus. The mother is curious to know if the plane is as crowded as this, with everyone standing shoulder to shoulder, and I find myself at a bit of a loss as I try to explain how I will be served drinks and hot food, have access to a toilet that flushes, and then sit back and catch a movie.

As I board my plane, I quickly get to my window seat and we start to take off right away. I look out to see the family, most of them barefoot, waving frantically, and a sliding tear stops halfway down my face to await further reinforcement before continuing on its path.

We are quickly some thirty thousand feet into the sky, and I'm trying desperately not to hear the white couple next to me who are comparing their official 'Club Med' certificates, commemorating their two week extravaganza. My mind starts to drift and I begin to think of my home — a society where people have so much and yet so very, very little. A place where academic knowledge and material wealth is forever sought in a tomorrow that seems to never arrive.

On an esoteric path have I been walking, and now, with more unanswered questions concerning religion still in my mind, I would venture to suggest that this honest and deep feeling of love amongst all brothers and sisters is the only reason we are here.

# Bam Pay A (rend-moi mon pays, ONF)



by Brigitte Elie

Dans ce film de Tahani Rached, le peuple Haïtien exprime l'âme de son pays; une âme dont l'espoir — sans illusion — nous expose avec lucidité une conscience politique très développée.

Yves Flavien, un Haïtien qui a quitté son pays depuis vingt ans, y retourne peu après le départ des Duvalier. Flavien nous dit : «Je veux saisir sur le vif ce qui ce passe et ce qui ce vit dans ce pays qui est le mien.»

La caméra suit donc Flavien dans son pèlerinage à travers l'île de Haïti. Celui-ci nous présente les gens de son passé, comme Papa Loko, un ancien prisonnier politique que l'on rencontre devant la prison de Fort Dimanche, où il fut emprisonné pendant près de huit ans. Papa Loko, qui se dit lui-même illettré, nous impressionne par son érudition en matière de politique internationale. Il est au courant de Marcos et des Philippines, de Bokassa et d'autres dictateurs de notre époque. Il nous trace les grandes lignes d'un Haïti future, émancipé.

Il nous montre que Haïti ne peut profiter d'une aide militaire ou strictement industrielle. Ce dont le pays a primordiallement besoin, c'est d'une aide médicale et d'une réforme à long terme visant à installer une infrastructure agricole capable de nourrir le pays.

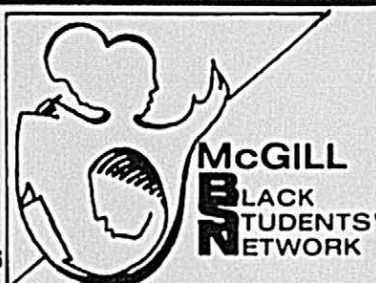
Dans «Bam Pay A», Tahani aborde divers personnages — tel(le) un instituteur, et la famille de Papa Loko —, tous-toutes dévoué(e)s à la reconstruction par la base de la société Haïtienne. Ce film rappel à chacun-ne qu'en Haïti il existe un peuple conscient, dans la douleur, de sa condition et de celle de son pays.

Un film à voir, au Cinéma Outremont, les 7, 8, et 9 février, puis à l'Autre Cinéma du 10 au 19 février. Info: France Tardif à l'ONF; 283-9387.



## February is BLACK HISTORY MONTH

### Schedule of Events



|                 | ARTS<br>WEEK                                                                                                 |                                                               | HISTORY<br>WEEK                                           |                                                                       | POLITICAL ISSUES<br>WEEK          |                                                                     |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date:<br>Event: | Feb 2<br><b>Movies</b><br>• <i>A Soldier's<br/>Story</i><br>• <i>Brother<br/>From<br/>Another<br/>Planet</i> | Feb 4<br><b>Jazz<br/>Musician</b><br><i>Westley<br/>Ryves</i> | Feb 9<br><b>Documentary</b><br><i>Gullah<br/>Language</i> | Feb 11<br><b>Documentary</b><br><i>The<br/>Africans</i>               | Feb 23<br><b>Book<br/>Display</b> | Feb 25<br><b>Book<br/>Display</b>                                   |
| Time:<br>Place: | 11h-15h<br>Union 107                                                                                         | 11h-15h<br>Union 107                                          | 11h-15h<br>B-09 / 10                                      | 11h-15h<br>B-09 / 10                                                  | 11h-15h<br>Union 107              | 11h-15h<br>Union 107                                                |
| Event:          | <b>Jazz<br/>Concert</b>                                                                                      | <b>Poetry<br/>Reading</b>                                     |                                                           | <b>Discussion:</b><br><i>The<br/>Africans</i><br>18h-21h<br>B-09 / 10 |                                   | <b>Speech:</b><br><i>Clarence<br/>Bayne</i><br>18h-21h<br>B-09 / 10 |
| Time:<br>Place: | 16h-18h<br>Alley                                                                                             | 18h-21h<br>B-09 / 10                                          |                                                           |                                                                       |                                   |                                                                     |

N.B. all events take place at the Union Building, 3480 McTavish St.

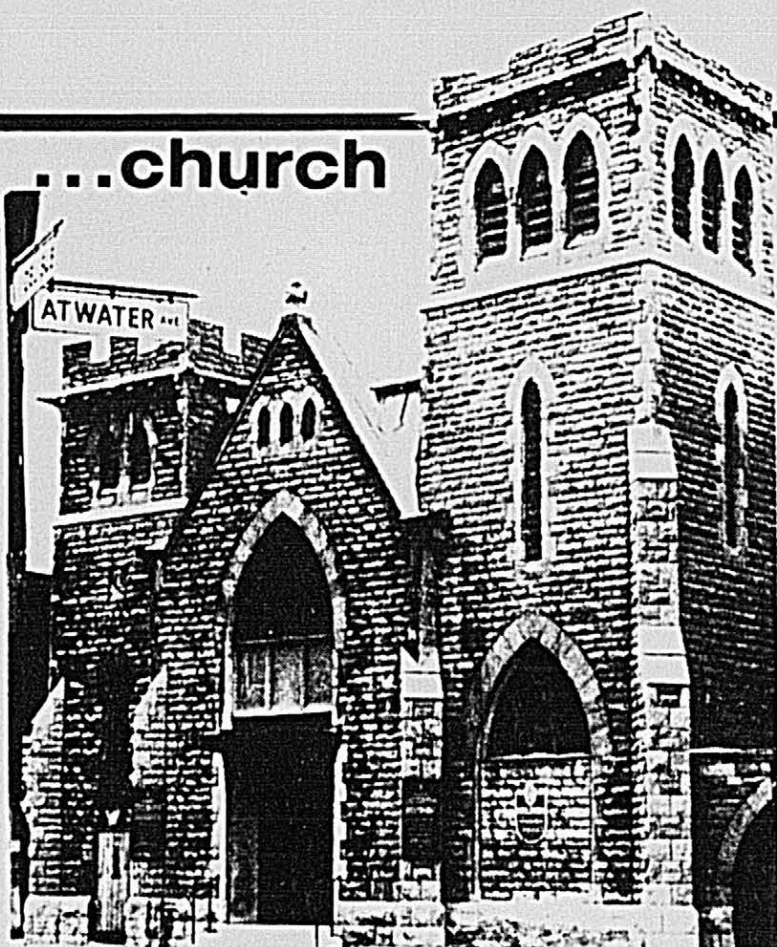
### GRANDE FINALE: **MOTOWN DANCE**

Place: B-09 / B-10  
Union Building

Date: Saturday,  
Feb. 28, 1987

Time: 21h  
Admission: \$3 in advance  
\$4 at the door

## ...church



continued from page 3

One example of such a protest song is, "Oh freedom, oh freedom over me/ and before I be a slave, I'd be buried in ma grave/ and go home to ma Lord, and be free."

It is now recognized that Negro spirituals, supposedly about heaven and the hereafter, were really about the earth — the here and now. This was especially true of escape songs associated with the Underground Railroad, or the movement of runaway slaves. Between the 1790s and the 1860s, many slaves fled the southern U.S. for the North, some as far north as Canada. The spiritual "O Canaan" refers not only to the heavenly Canaan of joy and justice, but to Canada as well. One can also add here, "Get on Board Lil' Chirlen".

Whether it was in the US, the West Indies or even in Canada, the Black Church is rooted in the dehumanizing and racist system of slavery. The Black Church, from an invisible institution on the plantations to its present visible structures, such as the Union United Church in Montréal (3007 Delisle), attests to the rejection and racism that forever tempt us to hate and doubt ourselves.

Today, the Black Church exists because of the self-sacrifice and mulish resistance of former slaves like Nat Turner, Richard Allen and Sojourner Truth in the US, or David George and Richard Preston in Canada.

Members of the Black Church live with the pervading consciousness that in both White Church and world, we Blacks are still considered less than the best only because of the colour of our skin, the thickness of our lips, the breadth of our nose and the tex-

ture of our hair. And it matters not that the totally Black Church is the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, the British Methodist Episcopal Church, the African United Baptist Association in Nova Scotia, or the Amherstburg Baptist Association in Ontario.

Feelings of racist rejection are also at the base of those Black Churches in predominantly White denominations such as the Unitarian Universalist, Anglican or Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Reformed (especially in South Africa), Seventh-day Adventist or the United Church of Canada.

To assume a role of relevance today, the Black Church, wherever it is found, must perform a prophetic and socio-political role in the larger Black Community. It is prophetic and socio-political when it unrelentingly exposes the cardinal sin of racism in both White Church and world — when it seeks, with other Black organizations and committed professionals, to explode the pernicious myths of racism, and when it explores creative ways to improve the quality of life in the here and now.

In this way, all of us as God's Black beautiful people 'here, there, and everywhere' can come to experience a much greater measure of liberation from those sins and systems that keep us down. Like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we can live out our dreams and marshal our drives in spite of those racist ecclesiastical, economic, and academic structures that usually stand in our way.

## SUMMER JOBS

### BLOSSOM POOL

Requires: MANAGER  
ASSIST MANAGER  
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## CHAUSSURES DE L'EST



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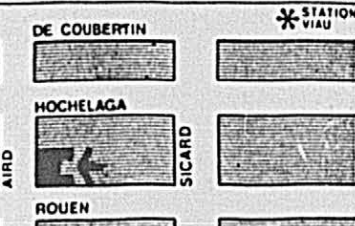
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south to Rouen, turn right until Sicard.



Wed. .... 12-5  
Thurs. .... 12-9  
Fri. .... 12-9  
Sat. .... 8-3  
Sunday .... 10-3



# Smuggling the truth out of South Africa

by Jennifer Gould

Reprinted from the Varsity  
Canadian University Press

A child runs into the tall grass nearby. Frantically trying to escape, he seems more like a frightened rabbit than a young boy in shirt-sleeves on a hot day. A large adult male soon catches the boy and begins to beat him. He adds a couple of well-placed kicks to the boy's frail body, now limp on the ground.

It's a vision that grabs you. The memory will linger on; it will haunt you. Yet this is only one of many images in Sharon Sopher's internationally acclaimed and illegally filmed documentary *Witness to Apartheid*.

Thousands more of these horrific images remain unfilmed. "What you see in the film is everywhere," says Sopher, an independent American producer who visited Toronto last month to promote the first showing of her film in Canada by the CBC.

Filmed secretly during the 1985 state of emergency in South Africa, the documentary presents moving accounts by victims and witnesses of police violence against children in the Black South African townships. Participants in Sopher's vivid film include young Black student activists from the banned Congress of South African Students (COSAS), the friends and family members of apartheid's many victims, along with the Black and White doctors who treat them, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

While Sopher's film is a startling portrayal of South African police brutality against children, hers is not the only documentation. Last April, the New York-based Lawyers Committee for Human Rights issued a 184 page report on the subject. According to the committee, "more than 200 children have been killed in the past year and hundreds more have been injured in police operations in the townships in which tear gas, birdshot, rubber bullets, sjamboks (metal tipped whips) and even live ammunition are used indiscriminately and excessively."

Over the last two years of growing unrest, more than 1,400 Blacks have been killed — over two-thirds by security forces. A large part of the violence was directed at children under 18 years of age.

"At times," the report said, "violence against children has been the result of a deliberate strategy of the security forces to suppress student organization and protests. In their frequent sweeps and patrols through the townships, security forces have singled out young people of school age for arrest, pursuing them with sjamboks... and shooting at random any child who runs away."

Sopher cites international reports stating that 25,000 people have been arrested since June — 11,000 of

The more research Sopher did for her South African article, the more she felt compelled to produce the film. "I went out and started doing research for the article and began to see just so much evidence about the torture of children and such horrendous things."

"Even though I've covered Africa (the revolutionary movements in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, and Mozambique in 1976)," says Sopher, "I went there thinking I knew the story, and I didn't."



which were children. Allegedly, 83 per cent of these people have been tortured. Although the South African police formally denied the Committee's and other allegations, Sopher believes otherwise.

"It (violence and brutality) was so easy to find that you really have to ask why, when all the major networks have bureaus there, they haven't done the story. I think it has to do with the fact that they're losing their visas."

Sopher worked for 12 years at NBC news before frustration compelled her to leave. "Networks are very restricted," she says. "If you're writing a wire copy story in the newsroom, you know, for instance, that you do not refer to the 'contras' as anything but 'freedom fighters.' There are very definite restrictions, and that's why I left."

Sopher left NBC in May, 1985 in order to concentrate on her own independent productions, like *Witness to Apartheid*, that NBC wouldn't have risked making.

Sopher originally went to South Africa to write an article on human rights activist Desmond Tutu. But Tutu inspired Sopher to break both convention and the law to produce the film.

When Sopher met Tutu in South Africa, he told her: "In a matter of a few weeks, journalists won't be able to move, to do any significant reporting here at all and, even though there are 200 journalists based here permanently, nobody is telling the story about the torture and the death of our children."



Sopher figured out what was missing from the commercial media's coverage of apartheid while working for NBC. The network gave Sopher insight into the way the Western media, consciously or unconsciously, manipulates domestic and international news.

"One of the jobs I had at NBC was to take in the network library. When I started thinking about what that footage was I had seen over the years, I realized I had never actually seen South Africans speaking. So I decided I really wanted to collect as many interviews with the people and no kind of the usual media celebrities, but with the people who are really the underbelly of apartheid — the ones who get kicked in the gut."

What Sopher discovered shocked and astonished her previous conventional Western assumptions. "The debates we get into over here are almost irrelevant to what those people (South African Blacks) were saying when I met them," she says. "I never heard any of them say 'God, I'm afraid of losing my job if sanctions are passed.' What they were all saying to me in one form or another was 'I'm afraid of losing my life: when my child walks out the door in the morning, I don't know if I'm ever going to see him again.'"

S somehow Sopher managed to smuggle the illegal film out of South Africa — she is reluctant to explain how — but not before she and her crew were arrested and detained by the South African police. They were held for some hours and Sopher credits her American citizenship for their release.

However, since the international showing of her film, many of its participants have been tortured. Some have ended up dead.

One Black doctor spoke of treating black victims of apartheid violence in the film. He was picked up by the South African police when the 1986 state of emergency was declared. He was shot and killed along with his wife on Dec. 1, shortly after being released. "I'm sure that being in the film probably had something to do with that," says Sopher.

In the film, the doctor had explained typical torture procedures used by the police. Permanent visible wounds left on some victims were also shown in the film. One young victim was beaten so badly that he was left with a head permanently soft as a melon. "I feel like dying, no more living," said another victim, a 15 year old boy named Johnnie. After two weeks in prison, Johnnie was so beaten that he is now barely able to speak. He has suffered permanent brain damage.

When the film aired recently in the US, Sopher added an update to inform viewers of the deaths of participants in the film since its making.

Sopher is very critical of the way most of her colleagues cover events in South Africa. "I really feel a lot of disgust and moral outrage because I don't think they're carrying out what they're charged with. I think their primary concern is maintaining their bureaus rather than covering the story," she says.

Journalists should operate inside South Africa "the same way I did — get a visa for one month, get the story and then get the hell out. And if you get kicked out, if you get arrested, it doesn't matter because you shouldn't intend to go back anyway," she says.

Sopher has two conclusions about the way the mainstream media covers events in South Africa. "I sat down and thought about all the images I had seen that the networks use to tell you the story. I realized, with all the footage and all the time spent covering South Africa, essentially only two images were being used — and they both kept the story on a very abstract level."

Mass funerals and mass confrontations between the police and protesters are the two images, says Sopher, which mislead the public into believing that violence in South Africa does not occur on any other level. "They cover these mobs, which are not images we can relate to."

Sopher says coverage of confrontations between police and protestors leads people to think



violence only occurs during these confrontations. "I think that's why I was surprised to see this other layer of violence which is the torture that takes place in custody."

While Sopher has covered two wars in Africa, she said that nothing has shocked her as much as the evidence of the torturing of children. Sopher says she's "read so many affidavits where even doctors, psychiatrists, are telling the police that if they continue torturing these people, they'll end up vegetables. And what they do is put them (victims) in psychiatric hospitals, treat them so that they start responding and then they start torturing them again."

Sopher says she's shocked by the reaction of viewers to the South African president's wife, Mrs. Botha, who spoke in the film of desiring another "big wipeout" of the black South African population, like that of the 1969 Sharpeville massacres to solve what she calls "the problem."

Sopher says she can't understand why viewers of the film are so shocked considering the apartheid regime has been re-elected since 1948. "It's not as if it was a dictatorship," she says. "People know what they are re-electing because it is the government that legislates apartheid."

Despite the need for North Americans to see the violence that underscores apartheid, Sopher has had complaints that her film is too brutal to expose people to. "And I say, wait a minute. What do you think about the people over there for real? If man is capable of doing this kind of thing, men and women have to be capable of looking at it and doing something to stop it."



# Ghana: resistance to colonialism

by Noi Quao

Native societies have traditionally attempted to protect their culture and customs in the face of both overt and covert colonial influence.

Europeans have used a variety of tactics to introduce their ideas to indigenous cultures. Generally, the welfare of the people was secondary to the pursuit of profits at their expense.

The introduction of new diseases and alien military tactics by the Europeans undermined native attempts to maintain their sovereignty. Nevertheless, some indigenous groups were successful in avoiding such a fate.

The West African country of Ghana is an example of a people who did their best to maintain their sovereignty, traditions of authority and customs in the face of increasing European intrusion into their daily lives.

Prior to independence, Ghana was known as the Gold Coast due to the abundance of gold that was easily accessible and consequently exported by various European powers since the thirteenth century. The Portuguese, the Dutch and finally the British limited their contacts with the coast to establish numerous forts as trade centres.

Any contact with the native people was almost exclusively related to trade, primarily the acquisition of gold. There was little interest in going inland to contact other people and explore. This allayed the indigenous peoples' fear of European inland interest and infiltration at the expense of a native culture.

The experiences Ghana's many tribes had with the Europeans, namely the British, differed by the extent and type of contact. The Akani are considered the longest-settled group in the region. They are divided into two major groups, the Asante and the Fanti. The Asante occupied the central area of the country. A powerful and ambitious nation, the Asante had a wide sphere of influence, exacting tributes from neighbouring territories and conquered peoples.

Ruled by the Asantehene, who is likened to a spiritual leader, the Asante also possessed a military hierarchy that often placed them in direct conflict with the British.

The Fanti were a coastal people who often suffered the military incursions of the Asante in their attempts to gain direct coastal access and territory. Along with the Assin, Wassaw and Denkyira, the Fanti confederation was formed as protection from the Asante

but also to limit British influences into their territory. The confederation sought to meet the demands of its times while maintaining traditional identity, customs and culture.

The Asante states also formed a confederation, which served primarily to extend their sphere of influence. The confederation was broken in 1901, but only at the end of conflict which lasted most of the nineteenth century.

The Ga-Adagme group are centred around what is now the capital city, Accra. With the Fanti, they signed 'the Bond of 1844' with the British. As understood by the confederations, the Bond was a trade agreement that did not legitimize territorial claims by the British. However the British saw the signing of the clause as a

means of influencing traditional customs and permitting the collection of duties for imports.

The Bond is also an example of how native leaders unfamiliar with the nuances of European treaty-making often found their people losing rather than gaining. In this case, the Bond's signatories, the Fanti and the Ga, in attempting to retain their culture, lost their sovereignty to the British.

Groups such as the Asante could only maintain prolonged resistance against the British because of their military organization. The Asante states were governed by the Asantehene, a chieftain whose position of office is marked by possession of the Golden Stool. This Golden Stool is the spiritual focus of the

Asante. To insult or desecrate the Stool is to insult the Asante.

For example, the Asante fought the British and the Fanti to gain coastal access, which would have allowed them to benefit directly from exterior trade. They also resisted any incursions into their territory. The Asantes' adaptability forced military and tactical defeats on the British throughout the 19th century.

It was when the British governor demanded that on his visit to Kumasi he sit on the Golden Stool — as a sign of rulership over the Asante —, that the Asante received the ultimate insult. This affront incited the Asante to launch their largest military campaign against the British.

Regular conflict with the writer extends beyond her writing and into the fields of librarian and educator. She must make herself aware of all those who have come before her, and then add to this heritage.

Susan Willis explains in an article on Black women writers, this is "the process of one coming to know who she is — not as an individual, but as a subject who gathers up the collective experience of Black Americans; and who then, in writing about that experience, gives shape and substance to the self in history."

This process which has been essential to the development of a black literary culture in the United States may be taken as a prescriptive formula for Blacks elsewhere. Only through a reclamation of the past, a past in keeping with our own experience, may Blacks in Canada hope to make advances into the future.

## ...All God's children

continued from page 7

Alice Walker, in *The Third Life of Grange Copeland*, explores the history of a Black man through three generations. At the end of the novel we are presented with a "womanist" revision of this history, through which all of the man's accomplishments are recognized as having been achieved at the expense of Black women.

Walker sees Black women as having been placed at the bottom of society through the cumulative

oppression of Whites and Blacks. It is from this position that they must be freed, so as to "escape into visibility."

Earlier writers such as Zora Neale Hurston, Gwendolyn Brooks, Nella Larsen and Margaret Walker must also be retrieved and placed in their proper light. Their books must be brought back into print, their prose and poetry placed in anthologies and they must no longer be rated as second to Black male writers and third to White writers. The task of the Black women

comment

## The Open-Minded Stereotype

"You must be a great dancer"  
"Ah, vous parlez français. Etes-vous haïtien?"  
"Did you hear the latest by Miriam Makeba?"

To be Black is not to be necessarily knowledgeable of all the diverse elements that are collectively associated with being Black.

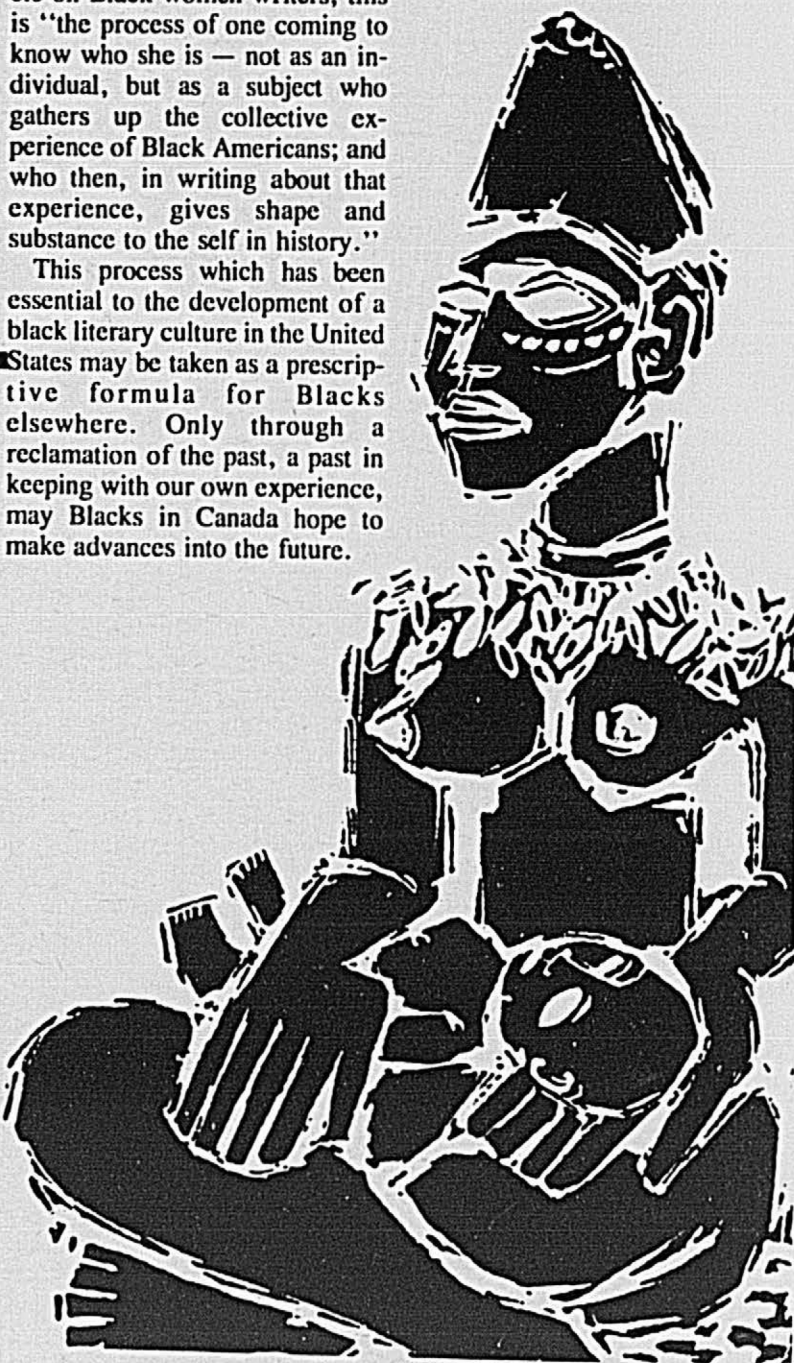
To think that with the rhetoric claiming 'all are equal in the eyes of the law,' that 'job positions should be filled on the basis of individual merit and qualifications,' people still make statements that reveal a worrisome degree of ignorance.

To meet someone who is Black does not mean he or she will know your roommate from St. Kitts, nor does it mean he or she will have any idea who is up and coming in a Gospel choir. Like anyone else, someone who is Black is also someone who is an individual.

In a setting where exposure to and contact with Blacks is limited to stereotypical TV and movie portrayals, such ignorance, while not personally tolerable, is expected. However, in the cosmopolitan and allegedly sophisticated setting such as that of a university, such ignorance is inexcusable. Does a Johnson from Newark necessarily know your cousin Billy who lives there? Does being Canadian mean that you know Vancouver's night spots? Of course not.

The next time you, as a White, meet someone interesting who is Black, do yourself a favour, avoid such statements. Even as jests, they are not funny. If anything they may be perceived as somewhat insulting. And that definitely does not make you the open-minded person you think you may be.

Noi Quao



mcgillDaily

### contributors

Tangwanda Soko-Hurewa  
Jonathon Ellison  
Tina Metaxis  
Janis Dayle  
Noi Quao  
Steve Miller  
Gillian deGannes  
Gosnell Yorke  
Michele Stephenson

Langston Hughes  
Richard Iton  
Fatima Jaffer  
Elizabeth O'Grady  
Lindsey Pollard  
Thia Fuller  
Egg Gladwin  
Colin the Druid

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Editorial Offices: 3480 McTavish room B03 Montreal, Quebec H3A 1A9 telephone (514) 392 8955 Business Manager: Brigitte Elie telephone (514) 392 8904 Advertising Managers: Caroline Elie, Boris Shedov, room B17 telephone (514) 392 8902 Clerical Staff: Pierre Tordjman Daily Typesetting - Shop Manager: Rachel Green, room B03 telephone (514) 392 8959 Typesetting and Assembly Staff: Robert Costain, Colin Tomkins, Eileen Lavery, Anna Asimakopulos

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## WHAT'S ON AT

HILLEL



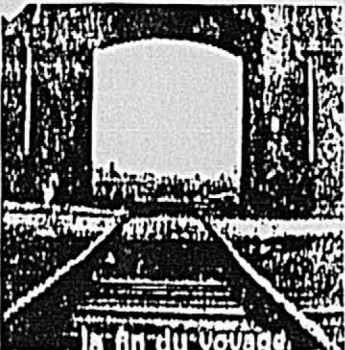
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Due to popular demand Hillel will be serving you dinner Monday through Thursday (3460 Stanley) 5 - 7 pm.

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Sun. Feb. 1  
10 am

## Dilemmas of the Mid-East in 1987

Special guest speaker:  
Professor YORAM PERI

He is a Professor of Political Science at Tel Aviv University visiting the Centre for Jewish Studies at Harvard University.

He was a journalist and an Israeli Defense Force Military Correspondent.

Date: Monday, February 2 / 87  
Time: 6:30 pm

Place: 3460 Stanley Street

Refreshments will be served

For more information, call Seth at 848-7492

Sponsored by  
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Canadian Zionist Federation

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE INTERMARRIAGE KIND  
A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

A four part series commencing  
Monday, Feb 2/87  
at 7:30 pm  
at Hillel, 3460 Stanley

The series explores mixed marriage, intermarriage, conversion and its impact on community and family with:

- Rabbi Howard Joseph (Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue) — Monday, Feb. 2/87 - 7:30 pm
- Rabbi Israel Hausman (Hillel Chaplain) Monday, Feb. 9/87 - 7:30 pm
- An intermarried couple — Monday, Feb. 16/87 - 7:30 pm
- A look at the Synagogue and ritualism — Sunday, Feb. 22/87 - 10:00 am - Chapel Maimonides Hospital - 5795 Caldwell

For more information please call Mark at 845-9171

|                                         |                                            |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Early Registration<br>(before Feb. 2)   | Late Registration<br>(after Feb. 2)        |
| \$6 / Per Couple<br>\$3.50 / Individual | \$7.50 / Per Couple<br>\$5.00 / Individual |

All activities will take place at Hillel unless specified.

845-9171

Ads may be placed through the Daily, Room B-03, Student Union Building, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Deadline is 2:00 p.m., two weekdays prior to publication.  
McGill students: \$2.50 per day; for 3 consecutive days: \$2.00 per day; more than 3 days \$1.75 per day. McGill faculty and staff: \$3.50 per day. All others: \$4.00 per day. Exact change only, please.  
The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damage due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print a classified ad.

## 341 — APTS., ROOMS, HOUSING

Roommate required — Available 1 Feb., female preferred. Atwater Métro, \$230/month, heat included. Call 937-1845.

Looking for a quiet non-smoker to share a 5 1/2 until the end of June. Duluth and St-Laurent. \$150 excluding utilities. Call 392-5325 after 6 pm.

Downtown sublet. Large 1 1/2, high ceilings, quiet, clean, near métro Guy. Furnished or unfurnished. Available mid Feb / Mar 1 - June 30, with option to renew. \$290. 935-1419.

Roommate wanted, to share bright spacious 3 1/2, living room 12' x 13' (yours) with quiet post-grad student. Prefer post-grad or working female. Must be non-smoker. \$195 inclusive. 843-3579.

Gay student seeks other-gay or open-minded hetero student to share 2-bedroom apartment near St-Laurent / Sherbrooke; \$270 all included. Phone 286-1962 after 6 pm.

Apt. to share \$300 per month. MacDonald Ave. Furnished except bedroom. Near buses and métro, visit Jan 30 & 31. Call 342-9363

after 7 pm.

Looking for female to share special, sunny, beautiful, furnished four bedroom 8 1/2 on St-Denis near Pins. \$275/month. Heat included 845-5998.

Roommate wanted. Own room in a 6 1/2. \$180/month plus hydro. Close to bus and métro. Non-smoker only. Call 483-2878.

Rooms for rent — ideal for male students. Right on campus. \$185/month. All included. No pets. On Peel St. Phone 288-6717.

## 343 — MOVERS

Moving? All local moves done quickly and carefully by student with large closed truck. Fully equipped, reasonable rates. Call Stéphane - 288-8005.

## 350 — JOBS

Camp Maromac, a children's resident summer camp, requires staff for the following positions from June 27 to August 11, 1987. Counsellors. Instructors for: swimming, sailing, sailboarding, canoeing, waterskiing, tennis, land sports, gymnastics, computers, music, arts & crafts, registered nurses, nurses' aides, secretaries, waitresses, assistant cooks, potwashers. Excellent salary and working conditions. Call between 9 am & 5 pm, Monday to Friday, 933-4836.

Futon 7e Cie looking for fully bilingual salesman for new store in Point Claire, St-John & Hymus; \$6/hour, part-time, hours negotiable, 937-2253.

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Dentist needed to work full-time, in modern Dental Clinic, in high volume area. Interested parties please call (514) 270-1326 and speak with Tula.

## 352 — HELP WANTED

Female babysitter wanted Wednesdays and Fridays for 2 year old. References needed. Cote St-Luc area. 481-9696 evenings.

Metropolitan News, 1248 Peel Street. Newspapers, maps, the latest fashion publications from all over the world. Toronto Star, Ottawa Citizen available 10 am same day. Needs office and general help, full and part-time. Apply in person.

## 354 — TYPING SERVICES

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## 356 — SERVICES OFFERED

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Guaranteed higher grades, guarantee you'll pass every course through unlimited hypnosis and flotation or money refunded. Call Mrs. Miriam Praw, 464-4421.

Sensation seeking... alcohol, drugs, or certain adventure sports? Let us help you get happily involved in any one of hundreds of constructive and exciting pastimes! Rick Blatter, Health & Fitness Consultant.

Typewriters: (IBM, Olympia, and other brand names) for rent and sale. We also do repairs and service contracts. Reasonable prices. For info: Mr. Assayag, at 737-6863.

Goalie available — 3 yrs Junior "A" experience — looking to play reasonably fast paced hockey (shinny). Call John 636-9767 (evenings 5-7 pm).

Come and practice your French language with francophones: Club Half and Half. 527-4086.

Come worship at St-Martha's-in-the-Basement, 3521 University, Sundays at 10:30 am. Brunch follows. For more information call Rev. Chris Ferguson, Presbyterian / United Church chaplain on campus: 392-5890.

Too busy with the books to clean your apartment? Let me do it for you. General downtown & ghetto areas. Reliable. Reasonable. Call Robyn 842-4622, evenings.

Anglican Chaplaincy — Student Eucharist every Monday 12 noon followed by chaplain's gourmet lunch at Newman Centre, 3484 Peel. For information about this, Bible studies and spiritual direction call Fr. Dennis Drainville 392-5890 or 879-1996.

## 361 — ARTICLES FOR SALE

For sale: double box-spring & mattress. One

month old, perfect condition. \$150 o.n.o. Tel. 935-7918 before 12.

For sale: Pearl drum set. 5 pcs. incl. road cases, \$650. 844-7229, Dave.

For sale: woman's leather knee length coat - small - \$79. Classic grey pin-striped long wool coat - \$59. Mornings, after 10. 937-1845.

For sale: Caber downhill ski boots, mens size 8. Downhill skis, Atomic 190 cm, Rossignol 170 cm; Spalding 160 cm. Call after 6 pm, 931-8400.

Electric stove: good condition, \$100 (o.b.o.) Call 526-8752 evenings, Brendan or Colin.

New, never used G.E. micro-recorder, excellent for taping lectures. New at \$110, sell \$55. Also modules for Dungeons & Dragons. Contact Phil: 694-7394.

Two matching love-seats for sale. Balck with striking floral print, very attractive. Good condition. \$75 each. Call 934-0365.

## 363 — TO GIVE AWAY

Unique books! Not found in Book Stores! Over 500 titles, free catalog. Golden Mart, Box 971-MD, Montréal, H3G 2M9.

## 367 — CARS FOR SALE

Lada 81: good winter car, 87,000 km, 6 tires, sports steering wheel. \$600. Must sell. 687-0850, 276-0715.

Chevy Nova 1977, 2 doors, V8 305 engine, radial tires, good condition, \$600, 286-4077.

## 370 — RIDES

Ride wanted to New York City, Connecticut or any points South. Willing to share driving, expenses, witty repartee, picnic baskets. Any weekend warrants serious consideration, how about this one? 392-8959 weekdays (before 16h00) M-F.

## 374 — PERSONAL

Don't worry she didn't sleep with 6 different guys - my brother said it was only 5! Sunday, February 1, 11:38 am - be there...

## 383 — LESSONS OFFERED

Flute & recorder lessons / cours de flûte traversière et de flûte à bec. Theory, rhythm, for beginners or advanced. Call 388-5164.

Tai-Chi, yoga, karate, kendo, self-defense, gymnastics, dancercise, fitness, shape'n'tone - student discounts. Métro Vendôme. Shidokan International 486-1818.

LSAT / GMAT Prep courses for Feb. 21 LSAT classes - Feb. 5, 7\*, 8\*; Mar. 21 GMAT classes - Mar. 6, 7\*, 8\*. (416) 923-PREP, 1-800-387-1262. We offer courses in Toronto, Ottawa and Montréal. \*A full day session.

## 385 — NOTICES

Reggae Show — Kali & Dub Inc. plays Gertrude's on Saturday, Jan. 31. A great time - a great price only \$2. Rastaman Vibration Jah!

Snowbowl correction: Pi Lambda Phi has decided to sleep-in on Saturday, January 31. Game time is now 1:00 pm. Meet at Molson Hall.

THE MCGILL SAVOY SOCIETY  
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FEB. 4 - FEB. 7

MOYSE HALL — ARTS BUILDING  
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Department of  
Athletics

## INTERCOLLEGIATE SPORT

## Basketball

Concordia Stingers  
vs  
McGill Martlets

Martlets & Redmen  
Fri., Jan. 30 — 6:30 & 8:30 pm  
Currie Gym

## Hockey



UQTR  
vs

Redmen

Sun., Feb. 1 — 7 pm  
McConnell Winter Stadium

(Door prizes to be won at all contests)



## events

**Today**  
**Centre for Northern Studies:** Two day symposium on North in the 1980s. *Native wildlife management, the anti-harvest movement, and the commercialization of Northern wildlife.* Union Ballroom, 20h30.  
**Women's Union:** Potluck Supper and discussion on women and health. At 19h00, 3661 Ste. Famille, apt. 50, 844-6001. All welcome.  
**Management Undergraduate Society:** Management party, Union Ballroom, 20h00.

**Archaeology Speakers Series** presents Dr. Douglas Sutton, University of Auckland, on *Archaeology, Anthropology and History: Towards an Understanding of the NGA PUHI Chieftain, Northern New Zealand.* From 16h30, Lea 720.  
**Political Science Speaker Series** presents Prof. Jim de Wilde, School of Business Admin., Western University, on *Export Oriented Nationalism: An alternative to the Free Trade Debate.* Lea 424, 16h00.  
**South Africa Committee** will meet today at 16h45 in Union 410. Fundraising for SOMAFCO will be discussed.

**Irish Studies at McGill:** presents Prof. Maurice Elliott, York Univ., on *Conversations with the Cat or the Furniture: Recent fiction by Irish women.* Arts 160, 20h00.  
**Gay and Lesbians of McGill:** Part 1 of 5 part Communications Workshop - Self expression. Union 425/6, 19h00. Everyone welcome. 392-8912.  
**Library Workshop:** Term Paper Research, starting at at Undergrad. Library Reference/Info. desk. Social Sciences today, 13h00 - 14h00 and 15h00 - 16h00. 392-4288.

**Friday**  
**Arab Students' Assn.** Paul Findlay lecture *The Influence of Israel's Lobby on Free Speech*, at 19h30 in D.B. Clarke Theatre (Hall bldg., Concordia).  
**Debating Union:** Novice training seminar for beginner debaters. 11h00 - 12h00, Union 430. All welcome.  
**Alcoholics Anonymous:** To help suffering alcoholics and other who are suffering from drug addiction. Student Health Services Bldg., 3637 Peel St., rm 203, at 12h00. 392-5441 (Brenda).  
**McGill Caribbean Students' Society.**

General Meeting, and presentation on Trinidad and Tobago. All welcome. At 17h00, Union B09/10.  
**Library Workshops:** Term paper Research. Humanities, at 13h00 - 14h00.

### Inter-Residence Council and STUDENTS' SOCIETY OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY SPECIAL ELECTION for RESIDENCE COUNSELLOR

Nominations are being sought for the position of residence representative to sit on Students' Council. Term of office is effective from February 16, 1987 until June 1, 1987. Nominations are open from Monday, January 26 and will close 16h30, Tuesday, February 3, 1987.

**Election Polls: Bishop Mountain Hall**  
 4-7 pm Tuesday, Feb. 10  
 4-7 pm Wednesday, Feb. 11

Nomination forms may be picked up from Students' Society, Room 105, Union Building. Completed nominations must contain 20 signatures from students in residence.



Andrew Dinsmore  
Chief Returning Officer

### New Internationalist Magazines

**Selected Titles ON SALE NOW**

- Whitehoods 'Canada's Klu Klux Klan' - Sher
- Before The Mayflower - A History of Black America - Bennett Jr.
- White Supremacy - A Comparative Study in American & South African History - Fredrickson
- Living Under Apartheid - Smith

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### — Specials For McGill Students —

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SAT MCAT DAT**  
**Speed Reading**  
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 • THURS.  
 Prizes - Specials - Prizes  
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 • GIANT SCREEN

**bar Kicks**  
 288-2660  
 2051 de la MONTAGNE

# SNOWBOUND

**MONDAY, FEB. 2**

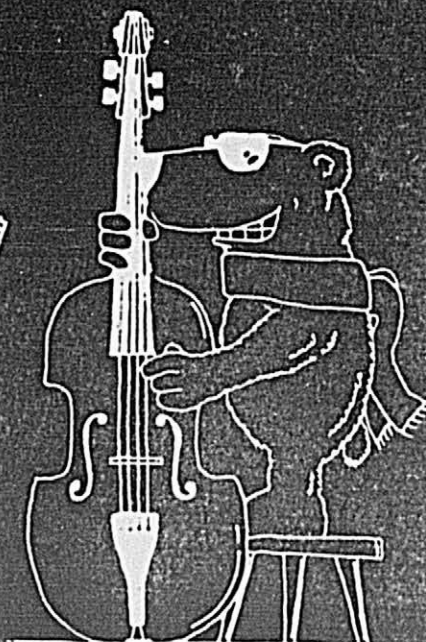
**NOON:** SNOWBOUND Opening Ceremonies  
 • Come and vote for the Carnival King & Queen ..... in Gert's  
 • Beginning of week-long SCAVENGER HUNT  
 • Broomball Tournament ..... all on Lower Campus  
 • Snowman-making contest ..... in The Alley  
 • Snow-sculpting contest  
**1:00 pm:** Tuesday Night Café

**TUESDAY, FEB. 3**

**NOON:** Fool House Theatre ..... in Gert's - FREE  
 • Broomball Tournament ..... all on Lower Campus  
 • Earthball Game ..... in The Alley - FREE  
 • Snow-sculpting contest ..... Lower Campus - FREE  
**1:00 pm:** Comedian Scott Orloff  
**7:00 pm:** Skating Party  
 • On the Engineering skating rink

**ALSO COMING:**  
 ACTS IN THE ALLEY & GERT'S  
 SKI NIGHT & DAY  
 SLEIGH RIDE on ILE BIZARD  
 SUITCASE PARTY  
 MIKE MANDEL & the Urban Turbans  
 TOHUKON

FOR MORE INFO, SEE THE WINTER CARNIVAL BOOTH IN THE UNION LOBBY

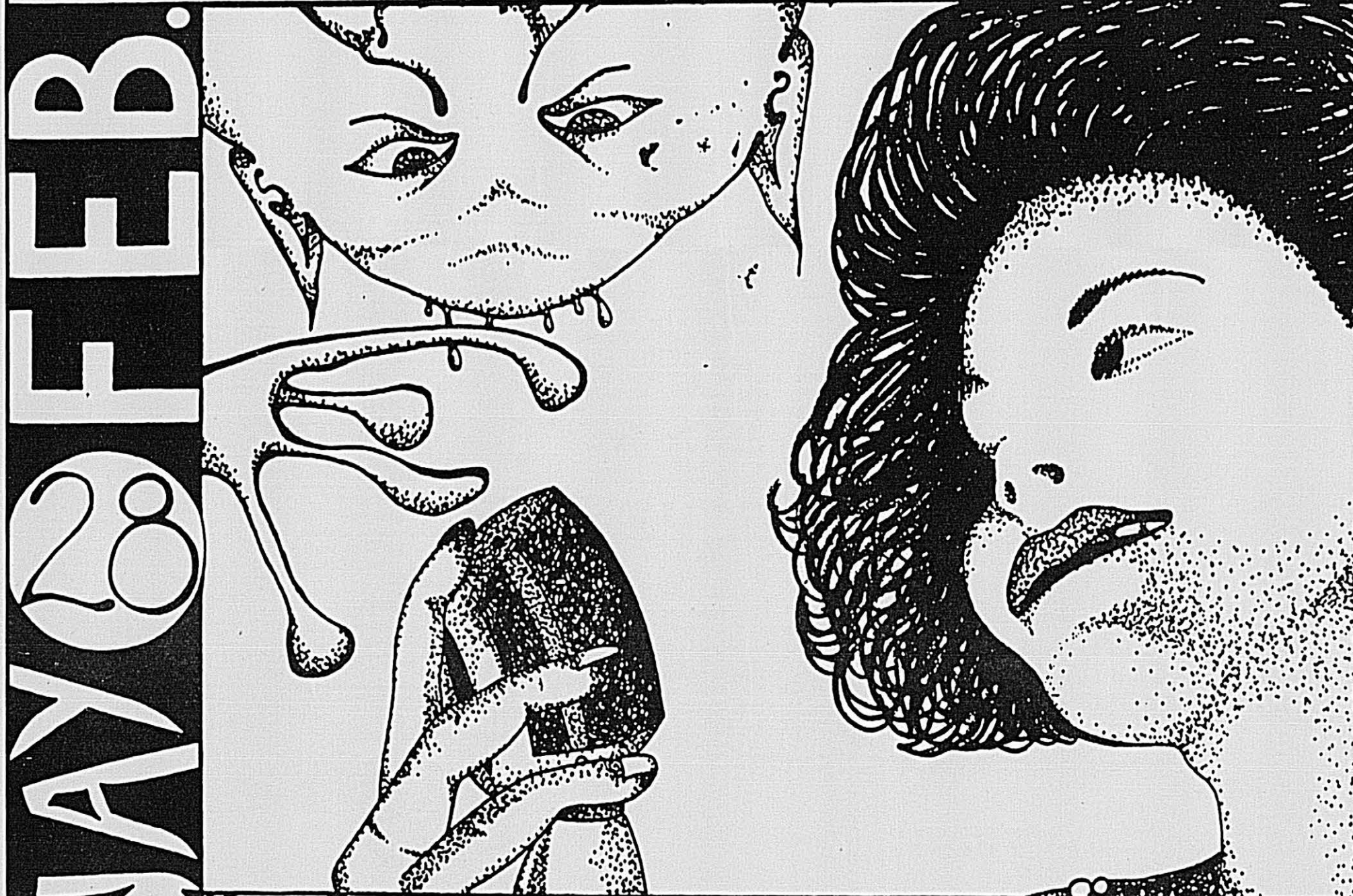




# tomorrow night

THE BIGGEST DAILY BASH EVER!

LYNDEY & ROLLARD



UNION BALL ROOM • 3480 McTavish • Doors OPEN 9:00 P.M.

## DEJA VOOODOO

## Concussion

## FAIL-SAFE

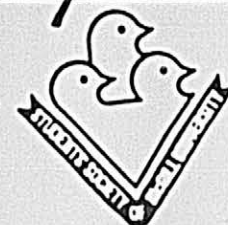
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